United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/999
18 October 1991

F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- Secretary-General to meet with his Special Envoy on Yugoslavia, Saturday, 19 October, at Headquarters.

- Secretary-General proposes to reduce cost of United Nations peace-keeping Force in Cyprus by asking Government with highest claims of reimbursement to level with other comparable contributor.

- Secretary-General calls on captors of Chargé d'affaires of Romania, kidnapped in New Delhi on 9 October, to release him "immediately and unharmed".

- Secretary-General, at World Food Day ceremony, says international community must act without delay to eliminate hunger and malnutrition.

- Special Political Committee approves draft urging Secretary-General to continue monitoring security situation of small States.

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A United Nations spokesman announced today that the Secretary-General was scheduled to meet tomorrow, 19 October, with Cyrus Vance, his Special Envoy on Yugoslavia, who would return tonight from a ten-day visit to Europe. Mr. Vance has held a number of meetings with European Government representatives, including the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, and has attended the Hague Peace Conference, chaired by Lord Carrington.

The spokesman said the Secretary-General and Mr. Vance would hold a press conference following their meeting.

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The Secretary-General has proposed to alleviate what has been described as "the chronic and ever-deepening financial crisis" of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

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In a report to the Security Council of 15 October, the Secretary-General said that the only remaining possibility for a reduction of UNFICYP's costs, while keeping the present structure and composition of the Force, was to ask the Government with the highest current rate of claims to reduce its requests for reimbursement to the level of the other comparable contributor.

The Government concerned, the report says, has considered the idea and has stated that it would be "prepared to contribute positively to finding a solution" on the conditions that the Security Council decides to move to assessed contributions; that the accumulated arrears to Member States continue to be paid in accordance with existing practice, it being understood that arreas would only be paid from future voluntary contributions received for this purpose; and that its undertaking to stay in UNFICYP on these new terms would not commit it beyond 1 January 1993.

According to the report, three other Governments have also stated that they would accept a similarly reduced rate of reimbursement, provided that it was linked to the adaptation of assessed contributions.

The Secretary-General had repeatedly expressed concern about the grave financial situation of UNFICYP and had stated that it was "most unfair" that troop-contributing countries, who already bear a considerable burden as a result of their participation in the Force, should have to absorb such a disproportionate share of the costs of UNFICYP.

Finally, the Secretary-General reiterated his long-standing recommendations that the Council approve the funding of the costs of UNFICYP from next January 1st through assessed contributions on the peace-keeping scale.

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The Secretary-General has expressed "deep concern" over the threats issued by the captors of the Chargé d'affaires of Romania, Mr. Livio Radu, who was kidnapped ir New Delhi on 9 October 1991.

The Secretary-General said today through his Spokesman that he deplored violence and human suffering of any kind, and believed that no aim could be furthered by the taking of innocent hostages. Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar called on the captors to release Mr. Radu, who suffers from poor health, "immediately and unharmed".

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The Secretary-General said today, at a ceremony to mark World Food Day, that hundreds of millions of men, women and children were still living in extreme poverty, deprived of human dignity. In addition, he said, one billion people were suffering from some form of food insecurity and malnutrition.

He called on the international community to act without further delay to adapt policies to eliminate starvation, mortality among children, and the

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elimination of major nutritional diseases. Unless special action was taken, the decade of the 1990s might bring a substantial increase in the number of hungry and malnourished people, especially on the African continent.

The President of the General Assembly, Samir S. Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, also making a statement on the occasion of World Food Day, said his own country had made great efforts to grow plants in the heart of the desert. He commended the important role played by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) everywhere in the world, to turn the vast deserts into fertile land, yielding cereals and food crops.

The theme of the World Food Day this year is "Trees for Life". The Day has been observed annually by the FAO since 1981.

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The General Assembly's Special Political Committee has approved a draft which would urge the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the security situation of small States. By the text, the Secretary-General would also consider bringing any threats to small States' security to the attention of the Security Council.

The Committee is currently discussing small States' particular vulnerability to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs.

By other terms of the 64-Power text, the Assembly would appeal to regional and international organizations to provide security assistance to small States, at their request. It would also stress the importance of respect for such Charter principles as sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in a country's internal affairs and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

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